

From the Upper Chamber



Senate Information Office ♦ 201 Legislative Office Building ♦ Atlanta, Georgia ♦ 404.656.0028

Report for Thursday, March 27, 2008

The thirty-fifth day of the 2008 legislative session was called to order by President Pro Tempore **Eric Johnson** of the 1st.

Senator **Bill Hamrick** of the 30th stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bill 558, Senate Resolutions 1202 and 1213 and House Bills 1261, 1269, 1271, 1302, 1375, 1378, 1414, 1418-1427, 1429, 1430, 1432, 1434, 1437 and 1439-1446 were read for the first time and assigned to committee. The clerk then read the reports of standing committees and second readers.

The Senate stood at ease to allow for a brief meeting of the Rules Committee.

The clerk then read additional committee reports.

The Senate stood in recess to allow time for morning committee meetings and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle** took the gavel to preside over the Senate.

Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19th moved to change the order of Senate business to allow for the reading of additional reports of standing committees and second readers. There was no objection.

Sen. **Williams** then moved that HB 990, the FY 09 budget, be read for the second time. There was no objection.

After the roll call, Lt. Gov. **Cagle** brought the Senate's attention to a letter from the Governor regarding his recommendations for the FY 08 amended and FY 09 state budgets.

The Lt. Gov. then led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance and introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Sen. **Williams**, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

Sen. **Gail Davenport** of the 44th took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to ask for a moment of silence in recognition of the passing of **Sherman Kramer**, a community business owner in the Senator's district.

Sen. **Steve Thompson** of the 33rd took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to offer his condolences on the passing of former Representative **Kil Townsend** of Atlanta.

The clerk read SR 1217, which recognizes the Americus High School Singers on their accomplishments. Sen. **George Hooks** of the 14th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The Senate Calendar for Privileged Resolutions, consisting of SR 1202-1223 and 1225, was unanimously adopted.

The clerk read SR 1050 and 1051, which offers condolences on the passing of Officers **Eric Barker** and **Ricky Bryant, Jr.**, respectively, who were killed in the line of the duty in January. Sen. **Gloria Butler** of the 55th took the rostrum to present the officers' wives with the resolutions.

The Senate Local Consent Calendar, consisting of SB 555 and 556 and HB 1353, 1354 and 1383, passed by a vote of 50 to 0.

Sen. **Bill Cowsert** of the 46th announced that the House agreed to the Senate version of SB 352, which allows the legislature to override a rule or directive of the Environmental Protection Division, and moved to immediately transmit the bill to the Governor.

The motion passed by a vote of 47 to 1.

Sen. **Balfour** took the rostrum to introduce the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **Melinda Willingham** of Gwinnett.

The clerk read SR 1219, which commends former Representative **William Austin Atkins, Sr.** on being recognized in *Who's Who in the World* for his outstanding leadership. Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The clerk read SR 1218, which recognizes GBI Special Agent in Charge and Georgia National Guard Lieutenant Colonel **Michael B. "Mike" Fordham** for his years of service to law enforcement in Georgia. Sen. **Ross Tolleson** of the 20th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The clerk read SR 993, which commends the founders of the Paul Anderson Memorial Park for their work in the community. Sen. **Nancy Schaefer** of the 50th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The clerk read SR 1160, which commends the East Side High School Wrestling Team on winning the 2008 AAAA Traditional State Championship. Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The clerk read HB 1031, which requires that public high schools with athletic programs have an external defibrillator on site for use during emergencies. Sen. **Don Thomas** of the 54th took the well to present the bill.

HB 1031 passed by a vote of 47 to 0.

Lt. Gov. **Cagle** paused to thank volunteer doorkeeper **Nancy Reynolds** for her service in the chamber today.

The clerk read HB 1183, which changes the repeal dates for non-lapsing revenue of several state agencies. Sen. **Cowsert** took the well to present the bill and Amendment 1, which provides for language clarifications.

Amendment 1 was unanimously adopted.

The Committee Substitute to HB 1183 was unanimously adopted as amended.

HB 1183 passed by substitute by a vote of 50 to 0.

Sen. **Eric Johnson** took the rostrum to recognize **Virgil May** on his retirement as a Capitol guard.

The clerk read SR 1185 and 1186, which commends the Senate interns and aides for their service during the session. Sen. **Johnson** took the rostrum to speak to the resolutions.

The clerk read HB 981, which removes weight and load restrictions for concrete haulers when making deliveries in the same or adjoining counties. Sen. **Bill Heath** of the 31st took the well to present the bill.

HB 981 passed by a vote of 51 to 0.

Sen. **Preston Smith** of the 52nd moved to withdraw HB 410 from the Senate Finance Committee and recommit the bill to the Senate Judiciary Committee. There was no objection.

The clerk read HB 984, which establishes children's transition care centers that offer a temporary, home-like environment for children who are considered medically fragile. Sen. **Balfour** took the well to discuss the need for care centers in Georgia.

The Committee Substitute to HB 984 was unanimously adopted.

HB 984 passed by substitute by a vote of 51 to 0.

Sen. **Chip Pearson** of the 51st moved that the Senate agree to the House Substitute to SB 463, which allows for the household use of recycled water, or "gray" water. Sen. **Pearson** took the well to present the bill and yielded to questions from Sen. **Robert Brown** of the 26th.

The Senate agreed to the House Substitute to SB 463 by a vote of 49 to 1.

Sen. **Pearson** then moved that the Senate agree to the House Substitute to SB 444, which seeks to streamline the Department of Transportation's (DOT) process of disposing of surplus property. He took the well to present the bill and yielded to questions from Senators **Seth Harp** of the 29th, **Thompson** of the 33rd, **Smith** and **Steve Henson** of the 41st.

The Senate agreed to the House Substitute to SB 444 by a vote of 34 to 19.

Sen. **Smith** moved that the Senate insist on its position on the Senate amendment to the House Substitute to SB 145, which allows for life without parole as a sentencing option in murder cases. There was no objection.

The clerk read HB 1044, which seeks to promote the use of respite care services programs for aging adults. Sen. **Renee Unterman** of the 45th took the well to present the bill and yielded to questions from Sen. **Heath** .

The Committee Substitute to HB 1044 was unanimously adopted.

HB 1044 passed by substitute by a vote of 53 to 0.

Sen. **Joseph Carter** of the 13th took the rostrum to recognize students from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, seated in the Senate gallery.

The clerk read HB 1216, which converts regional development centers into regional commissions for the purpose of area planning. Sen. **Williams** took the well to speak to the bill.

HB 1216 passed by a vote of 49 to 2.

The clerk read SR 1246, which outlines the upcoming schedule of the Senate. Sen. **Williams** took the well to discuss the schedule.

SR 1246 was unanimously adopted.

The clerk read HB 1303, which prevents county boards of health from regulating food nutrition information at restaurants. Sen. **Greg Goggans** of the 7th took the well to present the bill, and yielded to questions from Sen. **Heath** .

HB 1303 passed by a vote of 38 to 12.

Sen. **Dan Moody** of the 56th moved to suspend the Senate rules to allow for the first reading of SB 562. There was no objection and SB 562 was read and assigned to committee.

Sen. **Johnson** took the gavel to preside over the Senate.

Sen. **Jeff Mullis** of the 53rd moved that the Senate disagree to the House Substitute to SR 845. There was no objection.

Following the announcements, Sen. **Williams** moved that the Senate stand in recess until 6:00 p.m., then adjourn until 9:00 a.m. on Friday, March 28.

#